

**STATE OF ILLINOIS
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

Meeting of the Commission
May 20, 2015
9:30 a.m.

James R. Thompson Center
Murdock Room - IDHS
Suite 5-300
100 West Randolph Street
Chicago, IL 60601

and

Lincoln Land Training Center
130 W. Mason Street
Room 104
Springfield, Illinois

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Commissioners

In Chicago

Chair Rose Mary Bombela-Tobias
Duke Alden
Robert A. Cantone
Hamilton Chang
Terry Cosgrove
Nabi Fakroddin
Lauren Beth Gash
Hermene Hartman
Diane M. Viverito (via telephone)
Patricia Bakalis Yadgir (via telephone)

In Springfield

David J. Walsh

Absent

None

Staff

LaNade Bridges
Reva Bauch
N. Keith Chambers
Dr. Ewa Ewa
Michael Evans
Donyelle L. Gray
Evelio Mora
Christine M. Welninski

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Members of Public: None

NOTICE:

Public and closed meetings of the Illinois Human Rights Commission are audio recorded.

I. Call to Order

On May 20, 2015 at 9:39 a.m., Chair Bombela-Tobias called to order a meeting of the Illinois Human Rights Commission.

Pursuant to the Illinois Open Meetings Act, 5 ILCS 120/1 et seq., it was determined that:

- 1) A quorum of the public body was physically present at the meeting.
- 2) Prior to the meeting, Commissioners Viverito and Yadgir gave notice to the General Counsel and Secretary of the Public Body, Donyelle Gray that they would not be physically present for the meeting and requested to participate via telephone. Motion to allow Commissioners Viverito and Yadgir to participate via telephone made by Commissioner Cosgrove, seconded by Commissioner Nabi. Motion carried 8-0.
- 3) Commissioner Alden arrived at 11:10 a.m.
- 4) Commissioner Viverito's phone connection was cut off on or before the discussion of the New Business and was unable to vote for the New Business items.

II. Consideration of Minutes

April 22, 2015

The Commission voted to approve the minutes of the April 22, 2015 meeting as amended. The minutes were amended to reflect that Commissioner Cosgrove attended the April 22, 2015 meeting in Springfield, to reflect that Commissioner Chang was present and on time for the start of the meeting, having participated via telephone until he physically arrived to the meeting. Motion to approve the April 22, 2015 minutes as amended made by Commissioner Chang and seconded by Commissioner Gash. Motion carried 10-0.

III. Chair's Report

Rose Mary Bombela-Tobias, Chair

Chair Bombela-Tobias reported that she attended the meeting of the Illinois Association of Agencies and Community Organizations for Migrant Advocacy (IAACOMA) meeting

in Springfield, Illinois. The Chair gave a presentation about the Commission at the meeting and distributed Commission brochures.

IV. Staff Reports

A. N. Keith Chambers, Executive Director

Mr. Chambers welcomed newly appointed Commissioner Hermene Hartman. Commissioner Hartman briefly introduced herself.

Mr. Chambers reported that there was no news on the confirmation of Commissioners by the General Assembly. Mr. Chambers explained to the Commission that newly appointed Commissioners will have to appear before the General Assembly. These Commissioners were advised that protocol required them to give their representative in the General Assembly a call because their representative will introduce them on the floor of the General Assembly.

Commissioner Hartman asked if a 48-hour notice was possible for appearing before the General Assembly. Mr. Chambers explained that it was not up to the Commission to give such notice and that it up to the General Assembly and the President of the Senate.

Mr. Chambers reported that there is no new legislation pending before the General Assembly concerning the Commission.

Mr. Chambers reported that there was no news on the Commission's budget.

Mr. Chambers reported that the Commission's biannual audit will begin soon.

Mr. Chambers reported that he is still working on a contingency plan in case of a strike on July 1st, 2015. Mr. Chambers explained that in case of a strike, the Commission is not an essential service agency and will function with minimum staff.

Mr. Chambers reported that he is working on a pilot gap measure to cross-train the Commission's Administrative Law Judges to aid with the Request for Review caseload.

B. Dr. Ewa I. Ewa, Chief Fiscal Officer

Dr. Ewa reported that the Commission's budget is working effectively and efficiently.

Dr. Ewa reported that on June 1st 2015, the Commission's audit begins. Any calls or requests from the auditor should be forwarded to Dr. Ewa, Mr. Chambers or Ms. Gray.

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Dr. Ewa reported that union negotiations are in process and no proposals have been reached.

Dr. Ewa reported that all state agency CFOs and CIOs must work together to deal with purchasing issues.

C. Michael J. Evans, Chief Administrative Law Judge

Chief Administrative Law Evans gave the report for the month of April 2015. Deputy Chief Administrative Law Judge Bauch introduced herself to the new Commissioners.

D. Donyelle Gray, General Counsel

Ms. Gray welcomed the new summer Coles Fellow Holly Pope. Ms. Pope introduced herself to the Commission.

Ms. Gray gave general reminders to the Commissioners about Economic Interest declarations, ethics training, and timesheets

Ms. Gray announced that the meeting materials are now also available on Sharepoint, which is a secure CMS supported site. Ms. Gray requested that the Commissioners try using Sharepoint to test its utility for purposes of meeting material distribution, since the service was quicker and more cost-efficient than traditional mail delivery.

Ms. Gray distributed recent Employment Law updates.

Ms. Gray distributed a Commission contact list and asked the Commissioners to contact her regarding contact information that needs to be changed.

Ms. Gray also reminded the Commissioners to forward bios and photos for the HRC website.

V. New Business

A. Commissioner Orientation

The guest speakers were Chief Legal Counsel Ngozi Okorafor and Charge Processing Manager Brent Harzman of The Illinois Department of Human Rights (“Department”). Ms. Okorafor and Mr. Harzman gave an overview of the Department’s legal division and the charge process with the Department.

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Ms. Gray also covered some points regarding Commissioner duties as part of new-Commissioner orientation. Ms. Gray explained that the Commissioners are neutral adjudicators, and as such, there are ethical obligations the Commissioners should follow. Several points were specifically covered, such as recusing oneself when the Commissioner has a conflict of interest with a case presented to him or her, protocol on communications with the public via in person or mail/email, and media inquiries.

B. *Review and Approval of Joint DHR/HRC Rules on HRA Pregnancy Accommodations*

1. 2535 Joint Pregnancy Rules
2. 5215 Joint Pregnancy Rules

The Commission voted to approve the Joint DHR/HRC Rules on HRA Pregnancy Accommodations. Motion made by Commissioner Cosgrove and seconded by Commissioner Alden. Motion carried 10-0.

C. *Designation of Commission Vice Chair*

The Commission voted to designate Commissioner Nabi as Vice-Chair of the Commission. Motion made by Commissioner Cosgrove and seconded by Commissioner Gash. Motion carried 10-0.

D. *Outreach Committee*

The Chair called for volunteers to join the outreach committee. Commissioners Alden and Yadgir volunteered. It was also announced that the Power Point presentation is available to all commissioners.

E. *Resolution*

The Commissioners voted to make a resolution to recognize and honor several Commissioners who have recently left the Commission. A letter of recognition will be given to these Commissioners at the Commission's 2015 Christmas Holiday luncheon. Motion made by Commissioner Cosgrove and seconded by Commissioner Chang. Motion carried 10-0.

VI. Old Business

None

VII. Public Comment

None

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VIII. Executive Session

None.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:06 p.m. Motion made by Commissioner Cosgrove, seconded by Commissioner Cantone. Motion carried 10-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Donyelle L. Gray
General Counsel